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Guess who's *the king of kindergarten*

metroNEWS

PLANS ON THIN ICE

A sculptor carves animals for The Great Ice Show to be held near The Forks at the end of the month.

STEPHANIE TAYLOR/METRO

Warm weather jeopardizes Bonspiel, creates headaches for winter show

metroNEWS

NewLeaf takes off next month

AIR TRAVEL

Winnipeg to be included as main route for direct, low-fare flights

Michelle Bailey
For Metro | Winnipeg

Winnipeggers have another option if they are looking to uncover cheap airfares and direct flights.

NewLeaf Travel Company will take off for service on Feb. 12, said president Jim Young, offering service to Halifax, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Kelowna and Abbotsford.

Initial fares will range from $89 to $149.

"Most of our main routes feature non-stop flights that aren't currently offered," said Young. "The ultra-low-cost business model we're using has proven successful around the world, and we are excited to bring it to Canada."

Headquartered in Winnipeg, NewLeaf's service will start with two planes operated by Canadian-based Flair Airlines. Young said the goal is to increase the number of Boeing 737-400 passenger jets in the air by 13 over the next three years.

Barry Rempel, president of the Winnipeg Airports Authority, said there's no doubt the new airline will have spin-off effects for the city and the airport.

"I've watched what has happened in other cities where these companies have set up shop," said Rempel, "and generally there are about 14 jobs created per aircraft."

Phillip Houde, owner of River East Travel, said while it's good news, consumers should ensure they know what they are signing up for when they book with NewLeaf.

"Travellers need to recognize they will pay a fee for every thing, and that includes things such as needing them to print your boarding pass at the airport."

Young said everything beyond the fee you pay for your "seat and seatbelt" is considered "à la carte." Priority boarding, snacks, drinks, carry-on and checked baggage is all extra, with the exception of a purse or small bag that fits under your seat.

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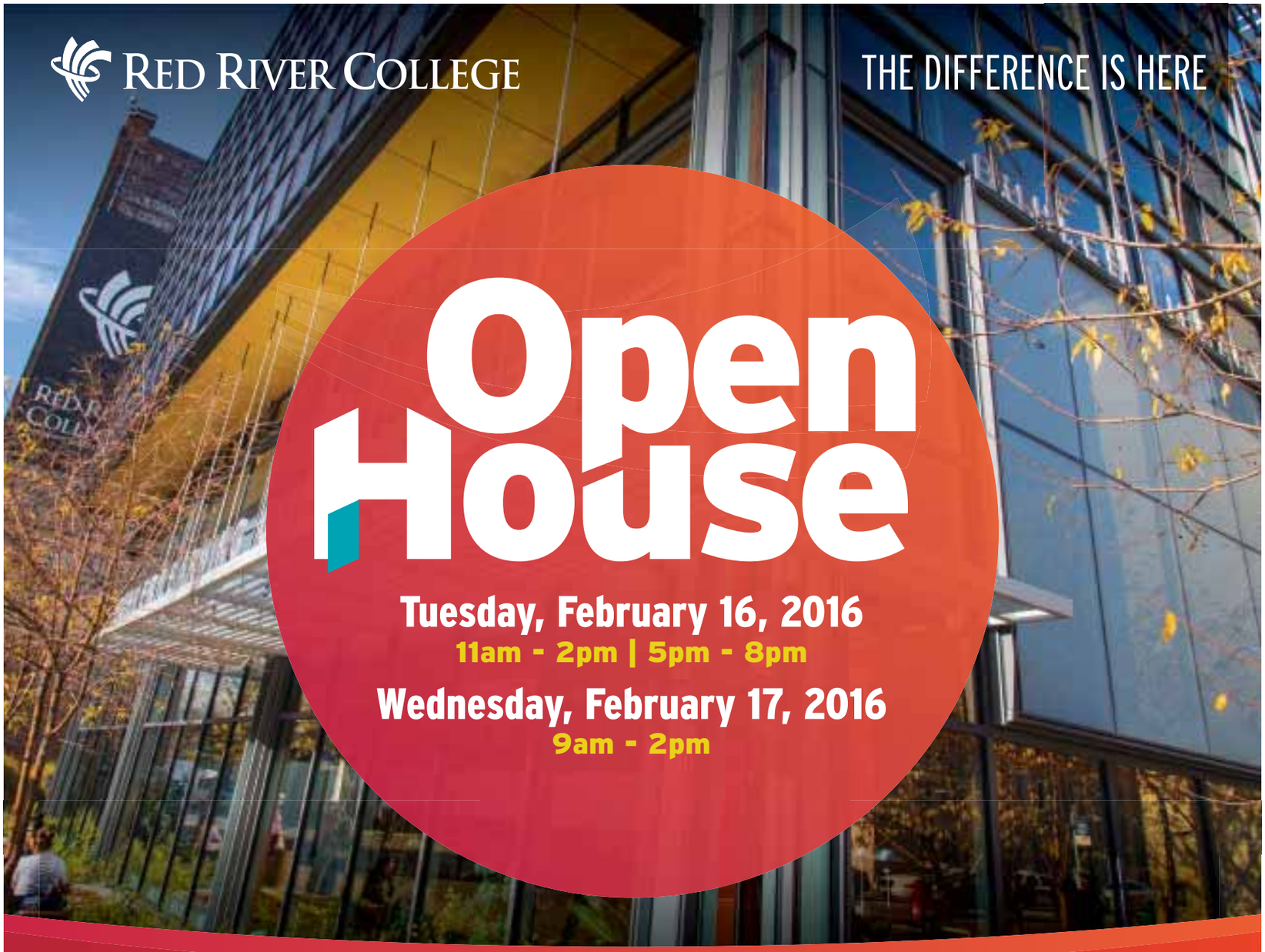

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Dolce & Gabbana launches its first line of hijabs and abayas.

POLICE

Man accused of theft of $400K from church

Winnipeg police say they have arrested a man after he stole $400,000 from a church over a period of six years.

Police said the man, 39, was an administrator at the Parish of Saint Bernadette on Cottonwood Road from March 2009 to December of 2015. During that time, he handled the church's finances.

Police allege that the man stole $400,000 over that time period from the church and covered up his theft by entering false information into the church's general ledger.

Police said an audit done by the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface in May caught the irregularities, and the church called police in July.

In November, the commercial crime unit took over the investigation.

Leo McCaughan, 39, was arrested on Jan. 5 and charged with theft, fraud and falsification of books and documents. He is in custody. METRO

RCMP

Infant girl in critical condition, no charges

Mounties say a two-month-old baby girl has been seriously injured near a First Nation in Manitoba.

RCMP say they got a call on Monday morning that the baby had been injured near the Sioux Valley Dakota First Nation, about 250 kilometres west of Winnipeg.

> **It is a tragic investigation at this point.**
> Sgt. Bert Paquet

While officers were heading to the location, they were notified that the infant had been transported to a local area hospital.

The baby was later transported to a Winnipeg hospital where she was in critical condition on Tuesday.

The Manitoba RCMP Serious Crime Unit is investigating, with the assistance of the Dakota Ojibway Police Service.

A residence on the Sioux Valley Dakota First Nation has been secured and is being held as part of the initial investigation.

Sgt. Bert Paquet says the home is where the baby lives and investigators are trying to find out where the injuries took place.

"It is a tragic investigation at this point," Paquet said Tuesday. "Our prayers are with her right now as we continue to investigate."

He said police have spoken to the parents of the baby. No one is in custody and no charges have been laid. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Clothing swap caters to plus-size women

FASHION

The Curvy Girl meant to be body-positive shopping event

Michelle Bailey
For Metro | Winnipeg

Heather Witherden is not afraid to refer to herself a woman with curves. In fact, she embraces it.

"I think we all need to feel good about ourselves and being able to dress in clothes that make us feel good is important," said Witherden.

Witherden and her colleagues from the Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC) at 17 Wing are in the process of collecting quality new and used clothes for a clothing exchange to be held Jan. 15 at the St. James Legion at 1755 Portage Ave.

There's a catch to this particular clothing exchange: all items must be over size 14.

The Curvy Girl event is for plus-sized women looking to refresh their wardrobe in a fun and body positive shopping environment.

"We are encouraging women to go through their closets and find items they may be tired of but that are still in good shape with no rips, missing buttons or stains," Witherden said. "Accessories are welcome, too. Clothes can be brought to the MFRC at 102 Comet Ave."

Heather Witherden says clothes can be brought to the MFRC at 102 Comet Ave.
DAVID LIPNOWSKI/FOR METRO

> **We are encouraging women to go through their closets and find items they may be tired of but that are still in good shape with no rips, missing buttons or stains.** Heather Witherden

Witherden said on the day of the event, donations will need to be dropped off at the Legion in the afternoon.

Ladies who donate items will be registered to participate.

If someone did not donate any clothes but wanted to take part, they can make a $15 contribution that will go to the MFRC.

Although she is not sure if this plus-size clothing exchange is a first for Winnipeg, Witherden hopes that it's something that will take off.

"The reality is, there are a lot of us who have body shapes that fit the 14-plus category."

For more information, Witherden said they have a Facebook page call the Curvy Girl Facebook Exchange.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

‘Lazy’ suit dropped by chief

A Manitoba indigenous leader has dropped a lawsuit against a high school teacher over Facebook comments that called First Nations people lazy.

Grand Chief Derek Nepinak of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs said Tuesday he received an apology from Brad Badiuk during a mediation ceremony the two attended, with the help of an elder.

“We employed some traditional ceremonial methodology in terms of sitting down and resolving the issue,” Nepinak said.

“It was basically a circle where we sat down with our medicines, we did prayer and we had an exchange of ideas. Brad had the opportunity to share some of the issues that I think perhaps contributed to the way he conveyed himself on social media.”

Badiuk, a technology teacher at Kelvin High School in Winnipeg, was placed on leave more than a year ago, after comments were posted on his Facebook page that accused First Nations people of being lazy and seeking free money from the non-indigenous population. Some of the comments were directed specifically at Nepinak and suggested he wanted to “get his hands”’ on other people’s money.

The comments made national headlines and were denounced by people including Murray Sinclair, head of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mayor Brian Bowman speaks to media at city hall Wednesday. STEPHANIE TAYLOR/METRO

Info came ‘too late’

WATER PLANT DISPUTE

Lawsuit details needed to be public: Mayor

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

Information about the city’s lawsuit against construction companies over workmanship at its $300-million water treatment plant should have been made public sooner, says Winnipeg’s mayor.

Brian Bowman said by the time he was required to sign off on a lawsuit, widespread knowledge of the troubles was long overdue. The suit — filed against engineering firm AECOM Canada and other companies late last year — alleges the Deacon water treatment plant, which opened in 2009, was built with faulty designs.

“At that point, in my view, it’s too late,” he told reporters Wednesday. “We need to back up right to when the information needs to get in the hands of decision-makers and the public.”

> **“I’m not going to discuss internal briefings.”**
> Brian Bowman

News of the lawsuit broke in the media after it was filed with the courts Dec. 7, 2015.

Legal action was pursued after officials say much damage took place at the state-of-the-art facility, including two explosions and leaks in the roof.

“What we want to do on a go-forward basis is we want to ensure that the information is made available well before there’s potentially lawsuits occurring,” Bowman said Wednesday. But as to recent requests made by councillors to be briefed on the issue, he remained tight-lipped.

“I’m not going to discuss internal briefings, but what I will say is that information needs to get in the hands of decision-makers and the public much sooner,” Bowman said.

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DONATE TO VOTE

Polar bear centre’s cubs have names

A unique fundraising campaign has netted thousands of dollars for Winnipeg’s polar bear centre and new names for two new residents living there.

The Assiniboine Park Zoo says its Donate to Vote campaign for the Leatherdale International Polar Bear Conservation Centre raised $18,000 for the centre; 579 votes were cast to name the centre’s two newest cubs. Eli and York were the top names chosen.

“York refers to the York Factory First Nation which has traditional lands that include important polar bear denning habitats,” said the zoo in a news release. “Eli is in honour of an Elder from the York Factory First Nation that lived and hunted in the area between the Nelson and Hayes Rivers.”

One of the cubs takes a walk at the centre in 2015. METRO FILE

“We’re absolutely thrilled with the results of this campaign and the names that have been selected for the cubs,” said Gary Lunsford, head of zoological operations.

The bears join Humphrey, Blizzard, Star, Kaska, Storm, Aurora and Hudson for a total of nine at the centre. METRO

IN BRIEF

Winnipeg taxi stand plan pushed back again

Winnipeg’s taxi industry will be kept waiting on the results of a pilot study that saw extra late-night cab stands installed throughout the city’s downtown.

The pilot study, approved in 2013, is part of a larger downtown taxi strategy that, on Wednesday, was granted a 30-day extension for staff to return with a report.

The approved plan saw loading zones in downtown and the Exchange District designated as taxi stands between 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. Five metered on-street parking spots were transformed into cab-only areas.

City staff said the pilot project expected to draw a revenue loss of $25,000.

A report on the study was due back in September, but has been pushed back several times.

Winnipeg Taxi Alliance spokesman Luc Lewandowski told the committee he’s pleased to see changes are afoot for the cab industry, but expressed concern that developments are a “little slow moving through city hall.” STEPHANIE TAYLOR/METRO

Mayor to be ‘quite vocal’ during Manitoba election

Winnipeg’s mayor promises to be a mouthpiece for the city in Manitoba’s upcoming spring election, but has no plans to endorse a candidate.

While speaking with reporters Wednesday, Brian Bowman repeated his commitment to push for a new municipal funding model that will better support the city’s growth.

This was a priority Bowman underlined during his mayoral campaign.

He said conversations are ongoing with all three provincial leaders, but currently has no plans to publicly throw his support behind any of the candidates.

“We need to work with whomever Manitobans decide should serve after the next election as their provincial government,” he said.

“I will also have much more to say as we get closer to the provincial campaign.”

Bowman gained the support of Manitoba Liberal leader Rana Bokhari during the mayoral race of 2014.

STEPHANIE TAYLOR/METRO

66% Spike In Recent Foreclosures Plus Aging Baby Boomers Downsizing Creating Discounted Property Frenzy In U.S.

New Real Estate Bonanza

Right now while you are reading this, hedge funds are buying U.S. property in mass. Foreign nationals are loading up on houses as fast as they can. Some savvy individuals are snapping up housing in the U.S. like never before.

In October, *Reuters* reported private investment firm Starwood Capital Group got in the game. They purchased 23,262 mid-rise and garden-style apartments for a whopping $5.37 billion. Other hedge funds are buying entire subdivisions under construction.

The Chinese are the number one overseas investors of U.S. real estate. Often they will buy 10 condos at once, sight unseen.

Does all this investment activity show the U.S. headed for another property bubble? The answer is no.

Demographics are driving demand for rental property to heights unseen in American history. *Bloomberg Business* says rents are only going higher.

The Millennials saddled with student debt, are choosing to rent. Others want to live in cities and avoid long commutes home ownership often demands.

One of the fastest growing demographic segments in the U.S. is those over age 65. Their downsizing activity is flooding the market with discounted property.

Foreclosures, Flips & Flowing Money

Foreclosures clogged in the U.S. courts are now surging. Those that know how are gaining windfalls of opportunity for flips or portfolio growth.

Yet individual investors are asking, "Can I still find good deals in U.S. property?" The answer is an emphatic YES.

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TURNKEY TRAININGS

Warm temps cool plans

WARMER-PEG

CITY EVENTS

Deep freeze predicted for this weekend is welcome news

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

Above-seasonal temperatures have meant organizers of some winter festivities in Winnipeg are left searching for alternatives to host their river-based events.

For the first time in its 14-year history, organizers of the annual Ironman Outdoor Curling Bonspiel are on the lookout for a new venue thanks to open water on the rivers near The Forks.

"We've never had to deal with this situation before," spokesperson Lynne Roy said Wednesday.

"Weather's always been very good to us. We hope for the best and we've never had a problem, we've always been able to build our rink on the ice."

Roy said organizers and officials from The Forks will meet on Friday to discuss alternatives.

Organizers say 40 ice sculptors from China will be carving creations out of ice blocks for the next month to prepare for The Great Ice Show taking place at The Forks. STEPHANIE TAYLOR/METRO

> **We've never had to deal with this situation before.**
> Lynne Roy from Ironman Outdoor Curling Bonspiel

But with Environment Canada predicting temperatures to drop into the -20 C range this weekend, she hopes the freeze will mean the river can be ready for the event, which runs Feb. 5-7.

A deep freeze is also welcome news to Andy Zhao, one of the event planners behind The Great Ice Show, which plans to make its Winnipeg debut at The Forks next month.

"Seems like the weather from now on is going to be real Winnipeg weather," he said on Wednesday, laughing.

Forty ice sculptors from China have been working since mid-December, carving ice blocks pulled from a flooded gravel pit outside city limits into delicate creations, from igloos to iguanas.

Zhao said they were initially planning to harvest ice from the nearby river, but when it was apparent Mother Nature wasn't going to co-operate, they had to look elsewhere.

That has meant work is taking considerably longer, he explained.

"Every day we do about four truck (loads). You can't stack them too high. Each piece is about 500 pounds," he said, adding 56 ice blocks are shipped per trip, with an additional 1,000 still needed.

He also said tarps had to be installed in order to protect the sculptures from the sunshine.

"But so far so good," he said.

CRIME

Police investigate pair of shootings

Winnipeg police are investigating two shootings that occurred in downtown and St. James.

In the first incident, police said, two men who knew each other met at a residence in the 300 block of Madison Street on Tuesday around 1 p.m.

During their meeting, police say, a 29-year-old man was shot in the lower body.

The victim fled the area and contacted police, while the culprit reportedly ran away.

Police say the victim is now in stable condition.

Later that day, police said, two men were at a residence in the 500 block of Spence Street around 6 p.m. when gunfire broke out, resulting in a 35-year-old man being shot in the lower body.

Police say the other man took the victim to hospital with life-threatening injures.

He has since improved to stable condition, police say.

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A scientist, left, and craft-brewing expert Chris Reynolds sample 100-year-old beer. HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

BREWING

Vile, century-old beer still 'the best'

It was the best of beers. It was the worst of beers (almost).

The century-old bottle from A. Keith & Son Brewery, the precursor to Halifax-based Alexander Keith's brewing company, was discovered in November on the bottom of Halifax harbour.

It has since undergone testing by experts at Dalhousie University who determined it was definitely beer, and it was safe — ish — to drink.

Local bar owner Chris Reynolds, who originally volunteered to have the discovery tested in a lab, finally got his chance to try a vial of the beer on Tuesday.

"No, it's not the worst I've ever tasted," he said with a laugh. "I wouldn't want to drink a pint of it."

The historic beverage is believed to have been bottled between 1872 and 1890.

Given that the beer's original shelf life would be "in the order of a month or two," according to Alexander Keith's brew master Steve Durand, it's unlikely to taste much like it did when first bottled.

> **"It's not the worst I've ever tasted.**
> Chris Reynolds

For Reynolds, an enthusiastic home brewer and bar owner, tasting such a historic beer was still a special experience.

"Despite the taste, it was one of the best beers I've ever had. Beers are all about context."

So, how was the flavour?

"Really complex, there was a lot going on," Reynolds said. "There were acidic notes, a little bit of saltiness, a little oak, a fruit character that existed on the nose and in the beer, itself."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Feds in fight over IT rules

CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE

Decision took away ability of courts to select own purchases

Newly released documents show the country's highest court is ready to launch a legal battle with the federal government over new IT rules that the Supreme Court of Canada fears would threaten its independence.

The Supreme Court is not alone in these concerns: the Federal Court, Federal Court of Appeal, Court Martial Appeal Court and Tax Court are all prepared to launch a constitutional challenge against having the government's super-IT department involved in their digital affairs.

The Liberals are now left to decide how to handle an issue created by a decision of the previous Conservative government that came into effect during the election. That decision forced the courts to go through Shared Services Canada for all IT purchases, such as servers, routers and software, rather than letting them make the procurements on their own. The courts had that power until Sept. 1, when the new rules kicked in and made them a "mandatory client" of Shared Services Canada, which oversees purchases and digital services for 43 of the heaviest IT users in the federal government.

The move approved by the Conservative cabinet in May 2015 was supposed to save money, since Shared Services Canada buys in bulk for the government, and improve digital security, because Shared Services Canada buys from safe suppliers.

Briefing material provided to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau shortly after he took office shows the courts were worried that having a government department involved in their IT services "and the perceived implications for control of their data" infringed on judicial independence.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Families meet to talk about coming inquiry

The families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls have been gathering for years — to share their stories, support each other and call for action — but this time was different.

Now that the federal government has committed to holding a national inquiry into the more than 1,200 First Nations, Métis and Inuit women and girls who have been murdered or gone missing in Canada, families came together in Thunder Bay on Wednesday to share their hopes and fears of what it will set out to achieve.

"A lot of people were feeling that they were finally going to have an opportunity to have some closure," said deputy grand chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, which represents 49 First Nations in northern Ontario.

"Maybe the justice may not take place, but I think even being provided an opportunity to be heard on their concerns and having an opportunity to change the present process (is important)," said Achneepineskum, who was at the pre-inquiry consultation meeting Wednesday afternoon.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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H-bomb threat provokes world

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

North Korea condemned globally for its actions

Soon after the ground shook around its nuclear testing facility, North Korea trumpeted its first hydrogen bomb test — a self-proclaimed "H-bomb of justice" that would mark a major and unanticipated advance for its still-limited nuclear arsenal.

The announcement Wednesday by the defiant, impoverished country was met with widespread skepticism, as well as a strong condemnation by the UN Security Council, which said it would begin work on a resolution for new international sanctions.

North Korea's fourth nuclear test likely pushed its scientists and engineers closer to their goal of building a warhead small enough to place on a missile that can reach the U.S. mainland. But South Korea's spy agency thought the estimated explosive yield from the blast was much smaller than what even a failed hydrogen bomb detonation would produce, and the White House said its early analysis of underground activity "is not consistent" with the North's claim of a successful H-bomb test.

There was high-level concern in Seoul and elsewhere. South Korean President Park Geunhye ordered her military to bolster its combined defence posture with U.S. forces. She called the test a "grave provocation" and "an act that threatens our lives and future." Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said, "We absolutely cannot allow this."

U.S. Defence Secretary Ash Carter spoke by phone with his South Korean counterpart Han Min-Koo, and they agreed that a North Korean nuclear test would be an "unacceptable and irresponsible provocation," according to Carter's spokesman, Peter Cook.

> **We absolutely cannot allow this.**
> Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

North Korea goes to great lengths to conceal its tests by conducting them underground and tightly sealing off tunnels or other vents through which radioactive residue could escape.

A successful H-bomb test would be a big advance in North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Fusion is the main principle behind the hydrogen bomb, which can be hundreds of times more powerful than atomic bombs that use fission..

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ROYAL FAMILY

Young prince has class

The heir to the heir to the heir to the British throne has started nursery school.

Prince William and his wife Kate marked the occasion by releasing two photographs of two-and-a-half-year-old George outside the school building.

The royal couple had earlier announced he would be attending Westacre Montessori School in Norfolk, 180 kilometres north of London.

The school has said he will receive the same treatment as other pupils.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Prince William and wife Kate released these images of son George on his first day at school. CONTRIBUTED/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

UNITED STATES

Gun measures fall short

The gun control measures a tearful President Barack Obama announced Tuesday would not have prevented the slaughters of 20 first-graders at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, or 14 county workers at a holiday party in San Bernardino, Calif.

Obama's executive action expands mandatory background checks to gun shows, flea markets and online sales, adds more than 230 examiners and staff to help process them and calls on states to submit accurate and updated criminal history data.

Those measures are seen as crucial to stemming gun suicides — the cause of two-thirds of gun deaths — by blocking immediate access to weapons. But an Associated Press review shows they would have had no impact in keeping weapons from suspects in several of the deadliest recent mass shootings. The shooters at Sandy Hook and San Bernardino used weapons bought by others, shielding them from background checks. In other cases, the shooters legally bought guns.

In Aurora, Colo., and at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C., men undergoing mental health treatment were cleared to buy weapons because federal background checks looked to criminal histories and court-ordered commitments for signs of mental illness. The suspect in a shooting at a church in Charleston, S.C., should have been flagged at the time, but errors and delays cleared the way for his purchase.

Obama rejected the idea that undermines the changes are not worth pursuing.

"We maybe can't save everybody, but we could save some," Obama said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Iraq offers to mediate

Iraq has offered to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran after tensions soared following the kingdom's execution of a Shiite cleric. Iraq's Shiite-led government relies on Iranian help to battle the Islamic State group, but is also trying to repair ties to oil-rich Saudi Arabia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Violence shortens life expectancy in Mexico

A new study suggests that at its peak, Mexico's drug violence was so bad it caused male life expectancy to drop by months. Experts say from 2005-2010, homicide rates increased from 9.5 homicides per 100,000 people in 2005 to more than 22 in 2010. It's now 16 per 100,000 in 2014. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, January 7, 2016

the big question

Will Obama's tears endear Americans to gun control?

Well, he's unlikely to sway the NRA, but as far as emotional impact goes, breaking down on live TV isn't a bad strategy for the president. Scientists have many theories about why adults cry, given that, unlike children, they can use words to express what's wrong. Some speculate that crying evolved as an "attachment behaviour": It's a way to ask others for help when words fail us. And in fact, some studies suggest that photos of teary faces and sad stories with characters who cry both cause research participants to feel sympathetic sadness and a desire to support and comfort the crying person. If Barack Obama — who choked up Tuesday while enumerating the seemingly endless mass shootings that have rocked the U.S. during his presidency — elicited such empathy in his audience, logically they'd want to support his plan to ensure more gun dealers are licensed and conduct background checks. That's guaranteed to make the gun nuts want to weep.

Politician + alcoholism does not equal Rob Ford

Michael Coren
For Metro

To state the bitterly self-evident, politics is a dirty business. But there is also a cloak of decorum that sometimes covers the body politic, with journalists respecting the personal struggles and private pain of many of those who govern us.

There are times when the private and the public mingle to such an extent that we have a right to know.

I have often been impressed at how what is genuinely important on an individual but not political level has remained confidential.

But there are times, of course, when the private and the public mingle to such an extent that we have a right to know. Newly minted Liberal MP and former broadcaster Seamus O'Regan obviously believed this when he recently announced that he is seeking help in a treatment centre to "live an alcohol-free life." In other words, he struggles with alcohol, and as he begins his new work as a representative of the people, realizes that now is the time to change.

I have good friends who have acted similarly. The treatment can be relatively brief, but it's thorough and tough and the struggle never ends. Yet the hardest part is over: the admission that there is a problem. It's humbling, frightening and, of course, opens one up to attack. As it most certainly did in this case.

Within hours of the O'Regan's statement, various conservative activists and even columnists and broadcasters were on the offensive, claiming that the man was "a drunk" and digging up criticisms he had made of former Toronto mayor Rob Ford. There's no difference between the two, they argued, but because one is a Liberal and close to Justin Trudeau he's getting an easy ride.

The juxtaposition is fatuous, offensive and downright cruel. I know O'Regan a little and have always found him to be a gentleman, but the greater point is that unlike Rob Ford, he was completely honest about his problem, there is no police investigation, he doesn't associate with shady characters, there are no manic, racist rants and no embarrassing those people he represents.

Ford used prohibited drugs and repeatedly lied about it. O'Regan drank too much of what is sold on every major street in Canada and told us so. His husband tweeted how proud he was of his decision; Rob Ford is on film offering his wife to another man for sex.

What is remarkable is not how similar, but how different are these two cases. As for those who attacked a man at his most vulnerable, shame on you.

Michael Coren is a writer, broadcaster and author of the forthcoming Epiphany: A Christian's Change of Heart & Mind over Same-Sex Marriage. Find him on Twitter @michaelcoren.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

Charlie Hebdo is just not interesting enough to offend me

Despite being Catholic, I'm not offended by the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo's new cover depicting God as a Kalashnikov-wielding terrorist.

I suppose I could be — the Vatican newspaper is — but that would mean taking the editorial position of the notoriously inflammatory publication seriously. And I don't.

To be clear: The attack one year ago today at Charlie Hebdo's Paris offices was unconscionable, as was the subsequent attack on a Jewish supermarket in the city, which together killed 17 people.

But demeaning faith in the most violent pen strokes is the magazine's raison d'être, and so I'm not surprised or offended by Charlie Hebdo marking the anniversary with everything it's got.

According to the Associated Press, the magazine features editorials attacking "university students who wear veils or openly pray in classrooms, hospital patients who refuse medical treatment from someone of the opposite sex and France's intelligence community. Mixed in were blasphemous caricatures targeting a range of beliefs, obscene sketches" and colourful profanity.

One editor wrote the magazine is commemorating colleagues who died "for daring to laugh at religion."

Richard Rohr, a prominent U.S. Catholic priest, has said he loves when atheists laugh at religions for stories like the Garden of Eden, because "No one believes that." Those stories are metaphors, he says, intended to describe a God who is otherwise indescribable.

Charlie Hebdo's atheism is as simplistic as laughing at a virgin birth. The magazine is practically fundamental in its anti-religious stance. Meanwhile, globally, eight in 10 people identify with a religion.

The magazine doesn't even speak to the more secular western experience of faith. In Canada, for example, fully 73 per cent of people believe in God, though only 30 per cent subscribe to a religion.

Not only does a cover like yesterday's not surprise me, then, it doesn't even stimulate me intellectually. The magazine can heap scorn better than most, but it has a juvenile understanding of that which it hates, and constructs no reasonable alternative.

The magazine makes the mistake of thinking insulting people is, de facto, a worthy goal. And in its commitment to offend and anger strangers, it has something in common with terrorist propaganda videos (on a far lesser scale).

On the other hand, the magazine does support the free movement of ideas by exploring the outermost reaches of free speech.

I'll give it that, and then get on with my faith.

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Your essential daily news

HBO will pull the plug on its hit comedy Girls after the show's sixth season next year

A Making a Murderer primer

STREAMING

A guide to the documentary everyone's talking about

The 10-part Netflix documentary series Making a Murderer, which casts doubt on the legal process in the case of convicted killers Steven Avery and his then-teenage nephew Brendan Dassey, has prompted celebrities to armchair sleuths to flood online message boards and Twitter feeds.

Authorities involved with the Wisconsin case say the series is slanted and omits crucial facts that led to Avery and Dassey being found guilty in the death of photographer Teresa Halbach.

The filmmakers, meanwhile, are standing by their work that spans nearly a decade and largely concentrates on the defence and perspective of Avery and Dassey's relatives.

The rush of attention has left many wondering: How did we get here? And what's next?

The back story

Avery made national headlines in 2003 when he was released after spending nearly two decades behind bars after being wrongfully convicted of rape. Two years later, Avery and Dassey were charged with killing Halbach, who visited the Avery family salvage yard to take photos of a minivan on Halloween. Her bones and belongings were found burned near Avery's trailer. Both were convicted and sentenced to life terms, but only Dassey is eligible for parole — in 2048.

The series' take

The documentary strongly suggests the possibility that Manitowoc County sheriff's deputies planted evidence against Avery, including a key found in his bedroom and blood found in the victim's vehicle. But Sheriff Robert Hermann denied that Tuesday. He said he watched the series: "I call it a film. It's missing a lot of important pieces of evidence."

Authorities say doc is biased

The series spends much of its time detailing the perspective of Avery and Dassey family members. The case's special prosecutor, Ken Kratz has told other media outlets that the documentary ignores the majority of the physical evidence. The omissions include the fact that Avery's DNA was found on the hood latch on Halbach's SUV, which was hidden on the salvage lot. Kratz has also said a bullet fired from Avery's gun was found in his garage with Halbach's DNA on it.

The filmmakers disagree

Laura Ricciardi and Moira Demos have stood by their work. They said in an email to the AP that critics who might say they intentionally omitted or underplayed key evidence to make the series more entertaining or tragic are wrong. "Those accusations are untrue and unfounded," the statement said.

Online petition

It seems unlikely an online petition seeking a pardon will work. The request posted on Change.org started by petitioning President Barack Obama, who has no such authority in this type of case, since it's not a federal matter. Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker spokesperson Laurel Patrick said Tuesday in an email to the AP that the governor hasn't watched the series and that "early in his administration, Gov. Walker made the decision not to issue pardons. Those who feel they have been wrongly convicted can seek to have their convictions overturned by a higher court."

Viewer reaction

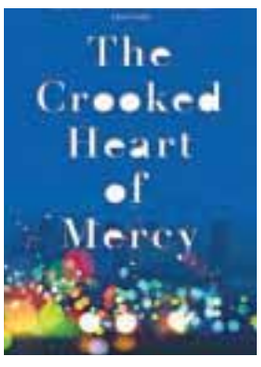
Celebrities have tweeted about how into the series they are, late night talk show host Seth Meyers spoofed it and fake Twitter accounts have been set up for some of the main players in the case. However, Sheriff Hermann said some of his officers have received threats in emails and voicemails. He said one was from a convicted felon who said an officer should "take his own life, or else he'd come up there and take it for him." Hermann said Tuesday that threat was passed along to Florida authorities to investigate.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brendan Dassey is escorted into court in 2007 for sentencing. Dassey's case is at the centre of the Netflix documentary series Making a Murderer. HERALD TIMES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW BOOK

Author credits volatile childhood for her sense of humour



Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

Billie Livingston has long been haunted by a family story that happened before she was born. Her father — a con artist whom she fictionalized in her 2012 novel One Good Hustle — and his first wife lost their two-year-old son after the toddler accidentally fell out a second-story window. "The shame and fear and grief. How do you ever get over something like that?" asks Livingston.

In her new novel, The Crooked Heart of Mystery (Random House Canada), the Vancouver author attempts to answer this question by drawing on real-life stories.

Following the death of her son, grief-stricken Maggie becomes a domestic helper for a woman who worships at a church that encourages after-death visits from loved ones. Meanwhile, Maggie's estranged husband, Ben, lies in a hospital bed with an unexplained bullet lodged in his head after taking veterinary drugs. (Ben's narrative originated with a Florida news story about a young man who shot himself during a bad mushroom trip, believing he was still asleep.)

Completing the triangle of grief is Maggie's brother Francis, a priest whose appetites for sex and alcohol land him a DUI and the star role in the viral video, "Drunk Priest Propositions Cops." Bullied horrifically as a child for being gay, Francis — whose character stemmed from a priest friend of Livingston's in rehab for alcohol — always found protection in the church, and despite his violations, remains planted in some kind of personal faith.

While The Crooked Heart of Mystery could have been mired in bleak hopelessness, Livingston has a light touch, an ability to find moments of humour even in the trio's heartbreaking situation. It's a gift she credits to her own volatile upbringing.

Beyond her father's grifting, her mother was a "pretty severe" addict, and young Livingston spent much of her childhood in and out of foster homes.

"There was a lot of dark stuff in my family," she says.

"There was always some mayhem going on. That's how we dealt with the darkest periods, which was to say something completely outrageous, because how else are you going to survive?"

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.

On the topic of Navel Gazing

INTERVIEW

Michael Ian Black shows a vulnerable side in new book

With a pair of deeply honest memoirs, comedian Michael Ian Black has now allowed a public transition from irony-shielded comic prankster to real, fully dimensional person. And all that pesky humanity has led to some uncomfortable moments.

"Because I have the gift of being unapproachable and kind of a dick, people rarely share with me, but I have noticed that people who have read the book feel like they know me (and) my marriage, and that's a strange thing to encounter," he said recently. "It's especially weird for my wife when people meet her and they're like: 'Oh yes, I know all about you.' That doesn't go over well."

The furiously prolific Black — who is simultaneously starring in several shows including Another Period and The Jim Gaffigan Show, hosting the popular podcast How to Be Amazing and compulsively nurturing a massive Twitter following — has returned to the realm of autobiography with the newly released Navel Gazing. The book finds the Wet Hot American Summer star observing his mother's stoic struggle with cancer while curiously investigating the physical insecurities that have plagued him as long as he can remember.

Somehow, a book about a family member's grave diagnosis is unfathomably funny.

For this he credits his mother, whom he interviewed extensively and "got to know a lot better."

For instance, Black's mom followed one of her many major surgeries — which included the removal of her belly button — by taking a marker and scrawling florid thank-yous to hospital staff across her stomach.

Between this intimate memoir and his last, You're Not Doing it Right — which the author says was too personal even for his wife, who has chosen not to read his latest book — Black has revealed depths that even close friends didn't know he had.

Michael Ian Black's latest book finds him observing his mother's struggle with cancer and investigating the physical insecurities that have plagued him since childhood. MIKE POINT/WIRE IMAGE

The one place he doesn't have to worry about those revelations reverberating, however, is Hollywood. "People in show business don't read," he said. "There's little to no danger of them having read my book."

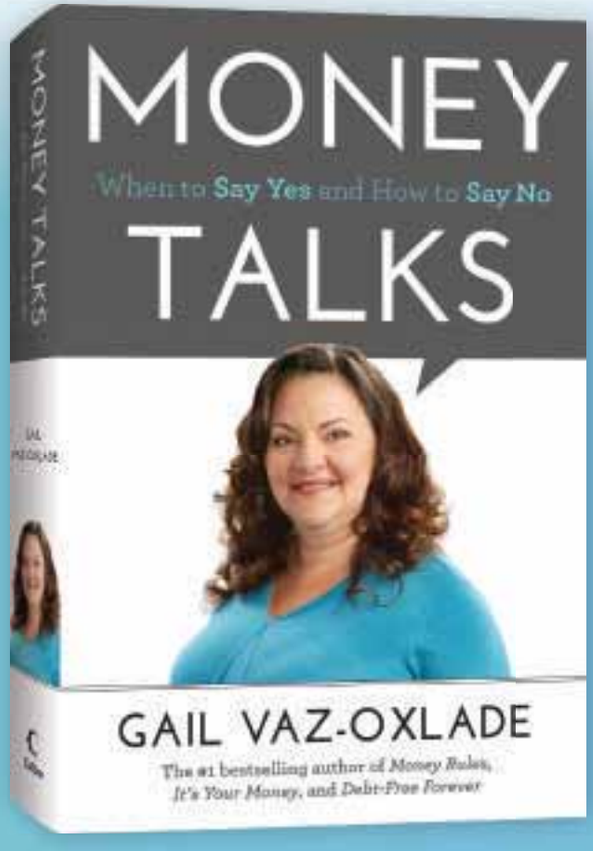
How is your mother doing?
Terribly. Her illnesses are nonstop and unabating. That's a very hard thing for her to live with and for those of us who love her to live with. But her attitude about it has always been remarkable. It's inspiring.

How did she react to your book?
She loved it. There was no pushback about anything, which makes me think she didn't read it. But she said she did, so that's good enough for me. That means I can publish it.

You mentioned your wife Martha didn't want to read it. How about your kids?
Oh God, no, not at all. They don't care about anything.

Even (teenage son) Elijah?
He's expressed no interest in it and I have no interest in sharing it with him. I assume there will come a point in his life — probably after I suffer a heart attack in the next six months — where he will have some curiosity about his history and my life. Now he has two books he can read for that information.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE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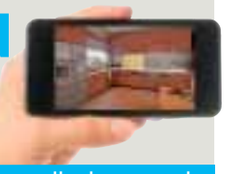


Whirlpool unveils new connected kitchen that can be controlled remotely

MEET THE CONDO

Living it large in Transcona

Ravenswood

CONTRIBUTED

Project overview

Posh condo living is coming to Transcona in this new construction in the heart of an emerging neighbourhood. The 47-unit condo building sits across from the site where Park City Plaza promises to bring an indoor recreation centre, new library and more residential units to the former City of Winnipeg public works yard.

Housing Amenities

Vinyl wood grain flooring, quartz countertops, tiled kitchen backsplashes, five stainless steel appliances and pendant lighting give the suites a luxurious touch. There's on-site parking for residents and visitors, an elevator, storage lockers, parcel boxes, main floor gym plus a lounge and gathering space. Several units include terraces.

In the neighbourhood

The Regent Strip — right around the corner — includes Kildonan Place shopping centre, Club Regent Casino, Canad Inns plus many restaurants and smaller shops. Plessis Road to the north includes the shops of Kildonan Green with groceries, banking and more restaurants. Historic downtown Transcona is directly east of Ravenswood.

Location and transit

Located at the corner of Plessis Road and Ravelston Avenue West, the new development puts commuters around the corner from Regent Avenue that feeds directly downtown. Plessis Road runs north for quick access out of town. It's also on a bus route.

SHEL ZOLKEWICH/FOR METRO

NEED TO KNOW

What: Ravenwood
Builder: LD Builders
Architect: Arccadd Architecture
Location: Corner of Plessis Road and Ravelston Avenue
Building: Four storeys
Sizes: 675 sq. ft. to 905 sq. ft.
Pricing: Starting at $205,000
Suites: 1-bedrooms with home office, 2-bedrooms, some with Juliette balcony, some with terrace
Status: Pre-selling
Occupancy: Fall 2016
Sales centre: 780 Ravelston Ave. W.
Phone: 204-981-2940
Website: myravenswood.ca

4 BEAUTIFUL BLASTS FROM THE DESIGN WORLD PAST

They say that everything that goes around, comes around. Home decor trends for 2016 are certainly proving that true. Look for inspiration from the 1970s and '80s when accessing the trends for this year— a flashback in time becomes the future for our homes.

Karl Lohnes
For Metro Canada

1 Darth Vader Toaster
The scariest reminder of the late '70s is now available to imprint your toast each morning. $75, UrbanOutfitters.com.

2 Desigual Denim Folk Duvet Cover
Add some jean patches and flower-power for some Partridge family love in the bedroom. $179, Simons.ca

3 Retro Vase
They'll think you dug this one up from your grannies basement. $65, CB2.com

4 Dial Dining Table
'70s gold and walnut offer up stylish dining from the past. $900, CB2.com

metro SPORTS

Lakers GM Mitch Kupchak told ESPN that Kobe Bryant's retirement tour comes ahead of the development of L.A.'s young players

Jets' playoff aspirations pinned against the ropes

VIEW FROM THE 300S

Andrew 'Hustler' Paterson

The Winnipeg Jets entered 2016 middling around the .500 mark and at the bottom of the NHL's tough Central DIvision. Poor special teams, inconsistent efforts on the road and a poor record in the division have all contributed to put their playoff hopes on life support.

In Nashville Tuesday night for as close to a must-win game as a team can have this early in the year, the Jets were dominated on all fronts except one — in net. Rookie Connor Hellebuyck calmly out-duelled Pekka Rinne turning aside 43 shots and stealing a victory on the road against the team they are chasing for the final playoff spot.

Hellebuyck has been all that was advertised and more since arriving with the big club in late November after the injury to Ondrej Pavelec. With nine wins in 13 starts and a sparkling .935 save percentage and 1.93 goals-against average, he has carried the Jets at times since he joined the team and has prevented a far worse fate in the standings for the team.

It's tough to watch the Jets and the rest of the Central Division right now and think this team is going to the playoffs this season. But fans of the club can legitimately be excited for the future of the team with a budding star at the most important position in hockey.

Meanwhile the NHL announced Wednesday that Dustin Byfuglien has been selected as the Jets' lone representative at the all-star game in Nashville. Byfuglien has certainly had a strong season so far, but the unique divisional roster set up and league politics seem to have conspired to deny the most deserving Jet, Blake Wheeler, of the all-star nod.

Wheeler has simply been the best Jet from Day 1 of the season. With 40 points in 40 games Wheeler sits seventh in NHL scoring, but he has been much more than just the offensive catalyst for the team. Wheeler leads by example and, despite having the "A" on his jersey, has played like the captain every night. Wheeler has not only been the Jets' best player but has shown himself as the real heart and soul of the team.

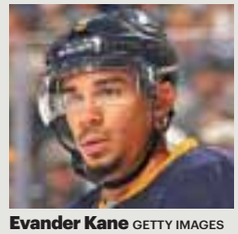
If you polled every Jets media member for a team MVP at this point, Wheeler would be the unanimous choice. It's unfortunate that he won't be in Nashville representing the Winnipeg Jets. He certainly deserves it.

The Jets are at the bottom of the Central Division, but that's not the fault of Blake Wheeler, left, argues columnist Andrew Paterson. CLAUS ANDERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

SABRES GAME

Don't forget the Jets welcome former teammates Evander Kane and Zach Bogosian to the MTS Centre on Sunday, when the Buffalo Sabres come to town for the first time since last season's blockbuster trade.

Count on an unusually raucous atmosphere for a Sunday afternoon game. The game may have something to do with a spike in tracksuit sales in Winnipeg this week.



Evander Kane GETTY IMAGES

NHL

Crosby left off all-star roster

The upcoming NHL all-star game will be missing one of the sport's top players.

Pittsburgh Penguins forward Sidney Crosby wasn't included on the roster list Wednesday for the league's mid-season showcase in Nashville on Jan. 30-31.

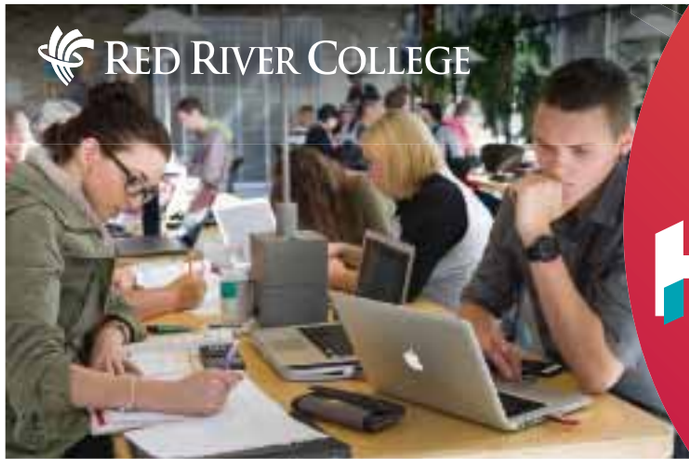
As part of a new format this year, players will take part in a 3-on-3 tournament featuring teams representing each NHL division.

Veteran centre Evgeni Malkin and defenceman Kris Letang will represent the Penguins on the Metropolitan Division team. Roster limitations — six forwards, three defencemen and two goalies for each division — led to Crosby's exclusion.

Since his 102-point rookie campaign in 2005-06, Crosby has averaged over a point per game in every season until this one. He entered Wednesday's game in Chicago with 31 points in 38 games. THE CANADIAN PRESS, WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAPTAINS

Earlier, fans voted Florida's Jaromir Jagr (Atlantic), Chicago's Patrick Kane (Central), Washington's Alex Ovechkin (Metropolitan) and Arizona's John Scott (Pacific) as the division captains.



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IN BRIEF

LeBron and his business cut ties with QB Manziel

LeBron James and his business partners will no longer work with Browns quarterback Johnny Manziel. A spokesman for James said the sides mutually agreed to end their relationship, which began after Manziel was drafted into the NFL.

Manziel missed Cleveland's season finale Sunday after he was spotted partying in Las Vegas recently. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flyers trade Lecavalier, Luke Schenn to Kings

The Los Angeles Kings acquired forward Vincent Lecavalier and defenceman Luke Schenn from the Philadelphia Flyers on Wednesday for centre Jordan Weal and a third-round pick.

Lecavalier and Schenn bring veteran experience and big contracts to Los Angeles, which won the Stanley Cup in 2012 and 2014 but missed the playoffs last season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Capitals sign Richards

The Washington Capitals agreed to terms on a $1 million, one-year deal with forward Mike Richards on Wednesday.

Richards was charged with possession of a controlled substance at the Canadian border this summer, but the team said he was cleared to resume his NHL career immediately. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Green Bay QB has started 11 post-season games while Redskins QB Kirk Cousins has only played in one. WESLEY HITT/GETTY IMAGES

Packed full of experience

NFL

Redskins can't match Green Bay's rich past in post-season

Two straight losses to finish the regular season sapped the Green Bay Packers of momentum going into the playoffs.

They do have at least one distinct advantage in their wild-card matchup this weekend against Washington. Been there, done that. Green Bay is making its franchise-record seventh straight post-season appearance. The New England Patriots are the only other NFL team that has been to the playoffs seven straight years.

"I think that you can harness the feelings and the things that worked in the wins and also think back on the feeling when you lost and your season's over and you try to use that as motivation," quarterback Aaron Rodgers said Wednesday.

"Playing at home can certainly help our ability to play at a high level."

Redskins QB Kirk Cousins

The longest-tenured Packer, Rodgers has started 11 post-season games and played in the post-season each year since 2009. The Redskins will be making just their fifth playoff appearance since 1993 and first in three seasons, when they lost a wild-card game at home to Seattle. Washington QB Kirk Cousins played in that 24-14 loss on Jan. 6, 2013, entering in relief of injured starter Robert Griffin III. It is his only post-season appearance.

Said Cousins: "Playing at home can certainly help our ability to play at a high level, but as far as does it offset things? I don't know. But I do know (the Packers are) a very experienced, talented team." Looked at another way, Green Bay has 212 games of playoff experience on its roster compared with 76 for Washington, according to STATS.

And that's counting the veterans who came over as free agents, like defensive linemen Terrance Knighton and Ricky Jean Francois, and safety Dashon Goldson, who together have 19 games of post-season experience.

"We've got some veteran guys on this team that have really done a great job as far as leadership's concerned of showing the young guys how to work and prepare," Redskins coach Jay Gruden said. But those experiences still pale in comparison to Green Bay, where seasons are judged more by how far the team got in the playoffs rather than just making it.

"That's the expectation and that's what we're all about," second-year receiver Jared Abbrederis said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROUNDUP

- Chiefs linebacker Justin Houston confirmed Wednesday that he plans to play in Saturday's wild-card game in Houston, his first game since hyperextending his knee in November. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
- New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady says his right ankle is feeling better. Brady walked without an apparent limp for his media availability on Wednesday. He said getting the week off before the Patriots' first playoff game will be helpful. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
- Canadian offensive lineman Ben Heenan is getting another shot at cracking the Indianapolis Colts' roster. The NFL team has signed the Regina guard to a contract. THE CANADIAN PRESS

BASEBALL

Griffey Jr., Piazza into Hall of Fame

Ken Griffey Jr. has been elected to the baseball Hall of Fame with the highest voting percentage ever and legendary catcher Mike Piazza is joining him.

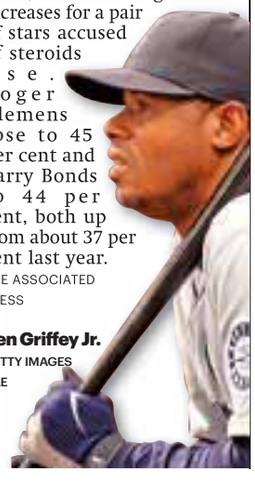
Jeff Bagwell and former Montreal Expos star Tim Raines fell short in results announced Wednesday.

A star slugger of the Steroids Era who was never tainted by accusations of drug use, Griffey was on 437 of 440 votes in his first appearance on the Baseball Writers' Association of America ballot. His 99.3 percentage topped Tom Seaver's 98.84 in 1992.

Piazza, on the ballot for the fourth time, received 365 votes.

A player needs 75 per cent to gain election. Bagwell missed by 15 votes and Raines by 23 in totals announced Wednesday.

After about 100 writers who no longer are active lost their votes under new rules, there were significant increases for a pair of stars accused of steroids use. Roger Clemens rose to 45 per cent and Barry Bonds to 44 per cent, both up from about 37 per cent last year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Ken Griffey Jr. GETTY IMAGES FILE

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ANNOUNCEMENT

I Sumit Kumar son of Jagdish Kumar holder of Indian passport no. G4826966 issued at Jalandhar on 19/09/2007 permanent resident of H No. 70 W No. 2 Vpo Ajnala Teh. Ajnala Distt. Amritsar Punjab India and presently residing at 14-770 Watt St. Winnipeg Manitoba R2K 2T1 do hereby change my name from Sumit Kumar to Dilsher Singh Chauhan with immediate effect.

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RECIPE Pumpkin Gnocchi

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

So good it's worth the effort.

Ready in
Prep time: 60 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 1 1/2 cups pumpkin puree
- 3/4 cup fresh ricotta
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, finely grated
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1 1/3 cups flour
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/4 lb cremini mushrooms, cleaned, trimmed and sliced
- 3 Tbsp fresh sage, chopped

Directions
1. In a large bowl, combine potato puree with ricotta until well blended. Add the Parmesan, sugar, salt and nutmeg and blend. Add a 1/2 cup of flour at a time until a soft dough forms.

2. Turn dough out onto a well-floured surface and separate into 3 or 4 pieces. Using your hands, roll dough out into a long, even tube, about 10-inch in diameter. With a sharp paring knife, cut each rope into about 20 pieces. Keep working until you have about a 60 pieces.

3. Bring a big pot of well-salted water to a boil.

4. Melt butter in a large skillet until it starts to brown. Add mushrooms and sage and cook for 3 minutes, and remove from heat.

5. Add gnocchi to the boiling water about a dozen at a time. Cook each batch for about 5 or 6 minutes, until the gnocchi floats to the top. Allow water to return to a boil between batches. Place cooked gnocchi in a large bowl and set aside.

6. Once all of the gnocchi is cooked, put the skillet back on the heat. Add your gnocchi and allow it all to heat up together. Gently stir so the pasta gets covered in the sage butter. Serve with a fresh sage for garnish.

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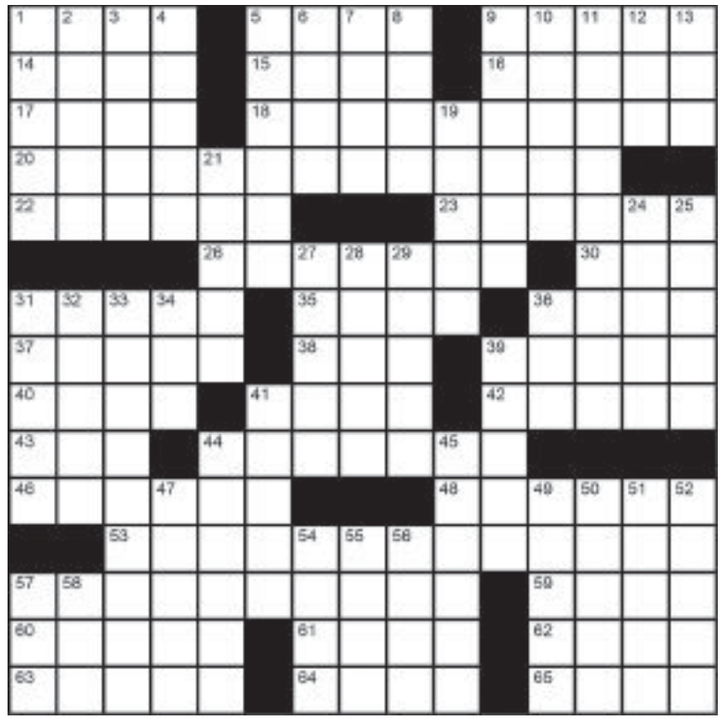
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. 1300 in ancient Rome
5. Mail
9. Record label
14. Director Mr. Petri
15. Entreaty
16. Sir Newton
17. Composer Mr. Schifrin
18. Crown Royal Northern __ __ (Canadian drink which is the 2016 World Whisky of the Year winner as chosen by whisky-expert-from-Britain Jim Murray)
20. Vancouver-born singer/songwriter, lead singer of Chilliwack: 2 wds.
22. Three sharps music key: letter + word
23. Meal
26. Whistlers in kitchens
30. French 'tea'
31. Stockpile
35. Tilled
36. "Buenos __!"
37. Metal mixture
38. Decide
39. Make a funny noise when laughing
40. Scratch
41. Math course, for short
42. Canadian actor Dean McDermott's mother-in-law
43. Olde-style word
44. Bitterness
46. Shoe part
48. Rent your apartment out
53. Tossed workout items: 2 wds.
57. __ Milk (Product by #11-Down)
59. Lioness in "The Lion King" (1994)
60. French composer, Erik __ (b.1866 - d.1925)
61. Crate strip
62. Mideast ruler, variantly
63. Toboggans
64. Choir member
65. Glasgow gal

DOWN
1. Grissol product, __ Toast
2. Insurance filing
3. "You're My World": 1964 hit for __ Black
4. Actor/rapper, LL __ _
5. Globe
6. Exuberance
7. Dweeb
8. Canadian comic actor Mr. Foley
9. Slangy insults
10. Impede, in law
11. As per #57-Across... Food brand with a flowery name and logo
12. Islet
13. Champion
19. Boo-booed
21. Overly sentimental
24. The __ (Tallest building in London in England)
25. Irritable
27. Rose's ouch!-inducer
28. Subject
29. Avril Lavigne's 2002 debut album: 2 wds.
31. Mojave plants
32. "__ __ the Family"
33. Fellow student
34. By what method?
36. Genetic stuff
39. Exfoliating __ (Skincare product)
41. South American animal
44. Changes
45. "Man I __ __ Be" by k-os
47. Lukewarm
49. Vapid
50. Andes animal
51. Island near the Statue of Liberty
52. Sovereign sorts
54. House, in Havana
55. "__ be okay." (There, there)
56. Clean-cut
57. Cousin of -enne
58. Ms. Bertinelli, to pals

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
You will be taken by surprise no matter how prepared you are today. Changes on the work front may be unsettling but if you stay calm and use your head you can easily change them to your advantage.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You have a lot of new responsibilities and are wondering if you are doing too much. Things will get on top of you today to such an extent you'll be forced to cut back on commitments.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
It is too late to back out of something you thought would be easy — you must go through with it. Strive to make a good job of it and, next time, don't volunteer so eagerly.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
The Sun is at odds with Uranus, planet of changes, and it will shock you out of your complacency. You've coasted along long enough — now you must live up to your potential.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Try not to attach too much importance to minor setbacks. Deal with problems as they arise and don't take anything too seriously. Your attitude to what happens is most important.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Something will force you to change your plans but you don't have to abandon them altogether. The route you were planning to take may be blocked but there are other ways to reach your destination. Be flexible.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You won't get your way today, especially on the home front. You are advised to let partners and loved ones call the shots just this once.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Forces over which you have no control will upset your plans but the long-term forecast is still good. You may even be pleased that you were compelled to change direction. Everything happens for a reason.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Try not to fall out with a friend today because it may be a long time before you get the chance to make up again. What they do may be annoying but you will only make matters worse if you make a big deal of it.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Like it or not you will have to admit that no matter how much you might want to fit into a certain environment it was never meant to be. Today's Sun-Uranus link indicates it is time to bring to an end something.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Be true to your principles and do the right thing. Your reputation will surely head south if you cut corners or try to get round the rules. There is much more than money at stake.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You'll find lots to occupy your mind today, if you enjoy a challenge. But if you're the type who gets upset when nothing goes right you might want to stay in bed a few hours longer!

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

8		7				2		
	3		8		9		5	
		6				3		
	4		9		5		7	3
				4				
	5	3	1	2	6	9	8	
		9				4		
		5				1		
			6	7	4			

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

for more fun and games go to metronews.ca/games

3	8	7	5	9	1	6	4	2
2	5	9	6	4	7	8	3	1
1	4	6	2	8	3	5	9	7
9	2	8	7	3	5	4	1	6
4	6	3	1	2	9	7	5	8
5	7	1	4	6	8	3	2	9
8	3	5	9	1	6	2	7	4
6	9	4	3	7	2	1	8	5
7	1	2	8	5	4	9	6	3

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